THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIS. REGUPATHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Since no final view has been taken, question of giving details thereof or time-frame does not arise.

**Research contracts**

2675. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry awards research contracts to consultants, NGOs, academic and research organizations, etc.;

(b) if so, the list of the research contracts with the names of the organizations who were awarded the research contracts in the last three years and its progress;

(c) whether the research contracts are illustrated on the website of his Ministry;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the details of internal process in deciding the topics of these research contracts;

(f) whether the research contracts were awarded through a competitive bidding process;

(g) if so, the criteria adopted for the competitive bidding process; and

(h) if not, the sanctity of the award process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. The Ministry does not award any research contract to consultants, NGOs, academic and research organizations. However, the Ministry promotes various research activities by providing grant-in-aid to various institutions/ organizations which *inter-alia* include colleages, universities, academic and research organizations, non-governmental organizations etc., for carrying out specific research projects in identified thrust areas of research, under its various programmes.

(b) to (h) Do not arise.

**Forest cover area in India**

2676. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the "Open Forest" is increasing and "dense forest cover" has been decreasing in the country, particularly in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, details of statistics of past ten years about open forest cover and dense forest cover in the country, State-wise; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken to increase the dense forest cover percentage in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRLS. REGUPATHY): (a) No, Sir. As per remote sensing based biennial assessments made by Forest Survey of India presented in tables given in Annexure 1 & 2, the open forest and dense forest cover for the country have remained between 7.95% to 8.82% and 11.32% to 11.78% respectively of total geographic area, between 1997 and 2005.

In Maharashtra the forest cover in open forest and dense forest categories has remained between 7.28% to 6.2% and 7.72% to 9.22% respectively of total geographic area, between 1997 and 2005.

(b) the requisite statistics have been given in the Statement-I and II. *(See* below)

(c) The Government of India is implementing National Afforestation Programme, Integrated Forest Protection Scheme, Assistance for Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries for afforestation, regeneration and protection of forests for improving the quality of forest and increasing its density.

***Statement 1***

*Stat-wise details of open forest cover of the country*

(an :a in km.)

| State/UT | 1997 | 1999 | 2001 | 2003 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 19,859 | 19,642 | 18,810 | 20,061 | 20,043 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 14,447 | 11,091 | 14,113 | 15,163 | 15,389 |
| Assam | 8,276 | 9,171 | 11,884 | 14,855 | 14,814 |
| Bihar | 13,224 | 13,200 | 2,348 | 2,459 | 2,465 |
| Chhattisgarh | | | 18,568 | 17,016 | 17,135 |
| Delhi | 10 | 53 | 73 | 120 | 122 |
| Goa | 252 | 251 | 310 | 1,014 | 1,014 |
| Gujarat | 5,250 | 5,504 | 6,479 | 8,627 | 8,577 |
| Haryana | 234 | 515 | 615 | 1,049 | 1,061 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 2,961 | 3,962 | 3,931 | 5,431 | 5,441 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 9,420 | 9,422 | 9,389 | 10,744 | 10,744 |
| Jharkhand | | | 10,850 | 10,949 | 10,969 |
| Karnataka | 7,546 | 7,632 | 10,835 | 13,144 | 13,153 |
| Kerala | 1,880 | 1,894 | 3.788 | 5,934 | 5,935 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 48,450 | 50,211 | 32,881 | 34,995 | 34,931 |
| Maharashtra | 22,397 | 19,951 | 16,588 | 19,092 | 19,092 |
| Manipur | 12,481 | 11,448 | 11,216 | 10,734 | 10,622 |
| Meghalaya | 11,613 | 9,708 | 9,903 | 9,874 | 9,842 |
| Mizoram | 14,427 | 14,552 | 8,558 | 11,928 | 12,378 |
| Nagaland | 10,734 | 9,027 | 7,952 | 7,919 | 7,881 |
| Orissa | 20,629 | 20,745 | 20,866 | 20,154 | 20,180 |
| Punjab | 876 | 895 | 883 | 836 | 835 |
| Rajasthan | 9,663 | 9,562 | 10,045 | 11,353 | 11,380 |
| Sikkim | 706 | 755 | 802 | 852 | 852 |
| Tamil Nadu | 8,367 | 8,398 | 8,983 | 10,565 | 10,604 |
| Tripura | 3,727 | 3,517 | 3,602 | 3,093 | 3,125 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 11,036 | 11,114 | 4,781 | 8,148 | 8,148 |
| Uttarakhand | | | 4,915 | 6,049 | 6,044 |
| West Bengal | 2,669 | 2,672 | 4,347 | 6,313 | 6,334 |
| Andaman & Nicobar | 127 | 125 | 337 | 633 | 624 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chandigarh | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 45 | 43 | 68 | 91 | 91 |
| Daman & Diu | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| Lakshadweep | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| Pondicherry | 0 | 0 | 1 | 25 | 25 |
| Total | 261,310 | 255,064 | 258,729 | 289,242 | 289,872 |
| %of G.A. | 7.95% | 7.76% | 7.87% | 8.80% | 8.82% |

*Open forest cover of the Maharashtra* (area in Km.)

| State/UT | 1997 | 1999 | 2001 | 2003 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maharashtra | 22,397 | 19,951 | 16,588 | 19,092 | 19,092 |
| %of GA. | 7.28% | 6.48% | 5.39% | 6.20% | 6.20% |

***Statement-II***

*State-wise details of Dense forest cover of the country*

(area in Km.)

| State/UT | 1997 | 1999 | 2001 | 2003 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 23,431 | 24,587 | 24,385 | 24,351 | 24,329 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 54,155 | 57,756 | 55,647 | 52,529 | 52,388 |
| Assam | J 5,548 | 14,517 | 13,406 | 12,880 | 12,831 |
| Bihar | 13,300 | 13,274 | 3,027 | 3,114 | 3,114 |
| Chhattisgarh | | | 39,162 | 38,976 | 38,728 |
| Delhi | 16 | 35 | 52 | 54 | 54 |
| Goa | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,255 | 1,150 | 1,150 |
| Gujarat | 7,328 | 7,461 | 6,434 | 6,187 | 6,138 |
| Haryana | 370 | 449 | 520 | 527 | 526 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 9,560 | 9,120 | 8,976 | 8,928 | 8,928 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 11,020 | 11,019 | 10,497 | 10,529 | 10,529 |
| Jharkhand | | | 11,681 | 11,620 | 11,622 |
| Karnataka | 24,857 | 24,835 | 22,461 | 22,102 | 22,098 |
| Kerala | 8,454 | 8,429 | 9,629 | 9,661 | 9,660 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 82,745 | 81,619 | 42,401 | 41,150 | 41,082 |
| Maharashtra | 23,746 | 26,721 | 28,452 | 28,422 | 28,384 |
| Manipur | 4,937 | 5,936 | 6,673 | 6,525 | 6,464 |
| Meghalaya | 4,004 | 5,925 | 6,632 | 7,051 | • 7,146 |
| Mizoram | 4,348 | 3,786 | 7,839 | 6,655 | 6,306 |
| Nagaland | 3,487 | 5,137 | 6,028 | 6,096 | 5,838 |
| Orissa | 26,312 | 26,288 | 28,178 | 28,199 | 28,194 |
| Punjab | 511 | 517 | 745 | 709 | 723 |
| Rajasthan | 3,690 | 4,309 | 4,497 | 4,468 | 4,470 |
| Sikkim | 2,423 | 2,363 | 2,362 | 2,410 | 2,410 |
| Tamil Nadu | 8,697 | 8,680 | 12,009 | 12,438 | 12,440 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tripura | 1,819 | 2,228 | 5,267 | 5,030 | 5,030 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 22,958 | 22,902 | 5,997 | 5,979 | 5,979 |
| Uttarakhand | | | 18,439 | 18,411 | 18,393 |
| West Bengal | 5,680 | 5,690 | 6,045 | 6,076 | 6,079 |
| Andaman & Nicobar | 7,486 | 7,481 | 6,284 | 6,174 | 6,005 |
| Chandigarh | 6 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 159 | 159 | 149 | 130 | 130 |
| Daman & Diu | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Lakshadweep | 0 | 0 | 12 | 15 | 15 |
| Pondicherry | 0 | 0. | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| TOTAL: | 372,087 | 382,229 | 395,169 | 388374 | 387,216 |
| %of GA. | 11.32% | 11.63% | 12.02% | 11.82% | 11.78% |

| State/UT | *Dense forest* | *cover of the* | *Maharashtra* | (a | rea in Km.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maharashtra | 1997 | 1999 | 2001 | 2003 | 2005 |
| %ofGA. | 23,746 | 26,721 | 28,452 | 28,422 | 28384 |
| | 7.72% | 8.68% | 9.25% | 9.24% | 9.22% |

**Problem of elephants in Orissa**

† 2677. SHRI RUDRANARAYAN PANY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether increase in number of elephants in Orissa has compounded people's problems;

(b) earlier and current number of elephants in States;

(c) the reasons for increase in number and whether a large number of elephants enter Orissa from Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) steps being taken by Government to save life and property from elephant riot, and the kind of advice and help being provided to State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) As reported by the State Government estimated population of wild elephants in Orissa has marginally increased to 1862 in the year 2007 as compared to 1841 in the year 2002. As such increase in number of elephants can not be said to be the main reason for the people's problem. Earlier and current estimated number of elephants in other States is annexed, as Statement. *{See* below)

(c) The reason for increase in number is breeding. There is not report of elephants entering Orissa from Andhra Preadesh.

(d) The Elephant Range States are being provided financial and technical support under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Elephant to take preventive steps like deployment of anti depredation squads, creation of physical barriers, improvement of habitats etc.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.